

REPORTED THAT BIG BATTLE OCCURS

Engagement off Port Arthur Supposed to Have Been Important and That the Russians Suffered.

Losses Thought to Have Been More Severe Than Those at First Reported

FLEET ENGAGES SQUADRON

Makarov's Flagship Believed to Have Been Blown Up by the Enemy—Rear-Admiral Molias Among the Dead.

London, April 13.—No actual news has yet reached London beyond the Russian official telegrams, but dispatches from Wei-Hai-Wei induce the confident belief that a naval engagement occurred off Port Arthur with severe character and that later telegrams will show that the Russians suffered severer losses than yet admitted.

A rumor has reached Rome that Vice-Admiral Makarov's squadron was attacked by the whole Japanese fleet, concealed behind the Miao-kiao islands and his retreat was cut off and he was forced to fight against odds with the result that all of his ships were damaged while the Petropavlovsk was surrounded by torpedo boats, struck by five torpedoes and blown up.

Another rumor is to the effect that Rear-Admiral Molias is among the killed aboard the Petropavlovsk. No great attention is paid to these rumors but the opinion here is that official explanations of the disaster are unsatisfactory.

JAPS CHASE CRUISER.

Russian Vessel Bayan Takes Refuge in Shelter of Ports in Damaged Condition.

London, April 13.—The Daily Telegraph's correspondent at Wei-Hai-Wei telegraphing under date of April 13, says:

"The British cruiser Esplégle reports that at 5:45 o'clock this morning she sighted five Japanese warships engaging the Russian cruiser Bayan,

making for Port Arthur from the direction of the Yalu. The Russian cruiser Askold and another cruiser issued from Port Arthur to assist the Bayan. At 6:45 o'clock the Russians got under shelter of the forts, but the Bayan was evidently damaged, as quantities of steam were seen escaping.

"At 8 o'clock the Japanese ships opened every gun on the forts, which did not reply, and after 15 minutes of bombardment the Japanese ships retired eastward."

HYDE-DIMMOND CASE.

Witness Reiterates Same Testimony as Handed in at Earlier Period.

San Francisco, April 13.—When the Hyde-Dimmond land fraud inquiry was resumed today before United States Commissioner Hearock, William E Volk formerly in the special division of the general land office at Washington, reiterated the testimony given yesterday. When asked how many cases he had advanced improperly for Hyde, Benson and others he answered probably 500 in all. He could not say how much money in all he had received from Benson but thought that the sum total would approximate \$2,000. The witness said he did not pass on the Benson cases in any other way than he would have done if they had been reached in their regular order.

LARGE SUM FOR PENSIONS.

House Committee Completes Work on General Deficiency Appropriation.

Washington, April 13.—The house committee on appropriations today completed the general deficiency appropriation bill, carrying a total of \$10,388,744. The largest item in the bill is \$4,000,000 for pensions. Of this sum \$1,000,000 is an estimated deficiency which will be caused by the recent service pension pension order. Minority members of the committee made a fight against this amendment and it was ordered reported by a party vote.

DRAWS IN HIS HORNS.

Adjutant General Bell Decides That He Will Not Arrest District Judge.

Telluride, Col., April 13.—Adjutant-General Sherman M. Bell, who yesterday announced his intention to arrest District Judge Stevens because of his criticism from the bench of Governor Peabody and the state military authorities, today conceded that the judge "is immune and free from arrest."

No News From Legation

London, April 13.—The Japanese legation tonight had no official information of the fighting off Port Arthur.

EXPLOSION OCCURS ON BATTLESHIP MISSOURI THAT KILLED TWENTY-NINE MEN

Five Young Officers and Twenty-five Members of the Crew Fall in Heap, When Two Thousand Pounds of Powder Go Off.

Magnificent Vessel is Engaged in Target Practice When Awful Calamity Occurs—Prompt Action of Captain is All That Saves the Ship From Total Destruction.

Washington, April 13.—The most serious accident that has occurred in the American navy since the blowing up of the Maine in Havana harbor in 1898, happened today on the magnificent battleship Missouri while she was engaged in target practice at a range of about 15 miles distant from the naval station at Pensacola. News of the disaster was conveyed to the commandant at Pensacola by wireless telegraph from the Missouri and thence by him transmitted to Washington, while the big ship was creeping back to port with her dead lying on the deck. The account which reached Washington of the accident was contained in the following dispatch from Admiral Barker:

"Five officers and 24 men are dead and two more are not live as the result of an explosion on the Missouri. Three rounds had been fired from the after 12-inch gun and a shell had been sealed and two sections of powder rammed home when the explosion occurred, killing every officer and man in the turret and all but three in the handling room. The commanding officer has informed relatives."

MEN FOUND IN HEAP.

Presence of Mind of Captain Saves Vessel From Destruction.

Pensacola, April 13.—By the explosion of 2,000 pounds of powder in the after 12-inch turret and handling room of the battleship Missouri, Captain William S. Cowles, commanding, 29 men were instantly killed and five were injured, of whom two will die. The Missouri was on the target range with the Texas and Brooklyn at practice about noon when a charge of powder in the left-hand 12-inch gun ignited below, ignited four charges of powder in the handling room, and all exploded. Only one man of the entire turret and handling room survived.

But for the prompt and efficient action of Captain Cowles in flooding the handling room and magazine with water one of the magazines would have exploded and the ship would have been destroyed.

Lieutenant Hammer, the ordnance officer, gave out a statement of the explosion and its probable cause. According to him, about noon, after the first pointer of the after 12-inch piece had fired his string, and second pointer had fired the third shot of his string, the charge ignited. The fourth shot was being loaded and from all indications the first half of the charge had been rammed home and the second section was being rammed home when gases from the shot previously fired or a portion of the cloth cover ignited the powder.

The breech was open and a dull thud gave notice of something unusual. No loud report was made, but flames were seen from every portion of the turret. A few seconds later another explosion occurred, somewhat more fierce. This was in the handling room below, where 16,000 pounds of powder, or four charges, were ready to be hoisted above, had ignited. Fire quarters were sounded and every man re-

sponded, and the magazine and handling room were flooded with water. In less than five seconds after the first explosion two streams of water were being played in the rooms, and when volunteers were called for every man responded, eager to go into the turrets and rescue the crew. Captain Cowles gave his commands, and but for his presence of mind and that of the officers of the ship the Missouri would have gone down. The second explosion occurred near one of the magazines, and so hot was the fire that the brass work of the magazines were melted. Officers and men with handkerchiefs over their faces made every effort to rescue the men inside, heeding their advice, the captain rushed. The officers endeavored to keep him from going below, as men fell unconscious as they entered and had to be pulled out by their comrades, but, unheeding their advice, the captain rushed below, followed by Lieutenant Hammer, the ordnance officer and Lieutenant Cleland David. Captain Cowles caught up a dying bluejacket in his arms and staggered to the deck with him. The bluejacket, with two others from the handling room, had crawled partly from their place of duty when they had been overcome.

Before the fumes of the burning powder had left the turret officers and men were laying out the dead and dying men. Three minutes after the explosion all were on deck, and surgeons from the Missouri, the Texas and the Brooklyn were attending to those not dead. The 25 men of the turret were found lying in a heap. They had started for the exit when the first explosion occurred and had just reached there when the more horrible explosion in the handling room occurred which burned and strangled them to death.

Lieutenant Davidson, the officer in charge of the turret, evidently had given some command to the men, as he was on top of the heap of men, having fallen there after he had allowed them to pass him to get out of the turret. The bodies were hardly recognizable, the terrible and quick fire having burned the clothing from the bodies of the men and the flesh hung from them in shreds. Faces were mutilated by flames and smoke only. Only one man was breathing when rescue was attempted and he died a moment after he reached the deck.

Police Raid Prize Fight.

New York, April 13.—The police raided a prizefight early today at Broadway and Sixty-fifth street and took 150 prisoners, including the alleged principals. The fighters and many of the men in the crowd were negroes. Clubs were freely used by the police who met unexpected resistance from the onlookers.

DEMOCRATIC LOVE FEAST.

Banquet at Iroquois Club Attended by 500 Enthusiasts.

Chicago, April 13.—The ways and means of bringing success to the democratic party in the presidential campaign this fall were discussed by prominent democrats, representing every part of the country, who attended the Iroquois Club banquet at the auditorium tonight in connection with Jefferson's birthday. Tariff reform, antagonism to trusts, independence of the Philippines and rigid economy in public expenditures were some of the suggestions offered by speakers to bring about the result. The feature of the banquet was a letter from Grover

Cleveland who had been invited to be present, in which he said: "It is especially fitting at this time of confusion in political ideas and misapprehension as to the meaning of true democracy that the character of the great exemplar of democracy should be fully appreciated, and that his political opinions should be better interpreted and understood."

When the toastmaster introduced General Nelson A. Miles 500 banqueters arose in a body and greeted the former head of the United States army with decided enthusiasm. General Miles in his response to the toast: "Our Country," made a forcible argument against imperialism.

A letter from W. J. Bryan was read, dated Lincoln, Neb., April 7, and concluded as follows:

"I trust that those who are honored with an invitation to speak at your banquet will raise the note of warning against the attempt now being made by money magnates to control the democratic convention and to secure the nomination of a democratic candidate who will be obliged in advance to betray the hopes of the democratic masses."

A letter was also read from John S. Williams, of Mississippi, democratic leader of the national house of representatives.

A letter was read from Franklin K. Lane, of California, in which he said: "The leadership which would make our party more democratic is the leadership which will restore us to the control of the government. Our creed is simple and clear but can not be recited by those who would make our organization an annex to the republican party by catering to that conservatism which seeks only to bring greater benefits to the already wealthy, nor by those who would make it an annex to the socialist party by joining in every attack, no matter how unjust, upon the wealthy."

William F. Vallas, of Wisconsin, former postmaster general, responded to the toast, "Faith and Hope." He said: "The time was—and it was the day of party glory—when democrats lived in close familiarity with party principles; rejoiced their souls in them by table and fireside, at the store, on the street, wherever in chance meeting were fellows and hearers; obeyed and followed were they lead. And shockingly as honesty in politics has been befouled by the corruption of protection, I trust that the day has not wholly passed. It is not believable that American manhood has become utterly lost in the mean, false and delusive selfishness or the cheap and tawdry vainglory to which the republican policy and practice now continue."

(Continued on page Four.)

CIRCUIT COURT TO DECIDE TODAY

Decision Relative to Right of Harriman, et al, to File Petition in Merger Case to Be Handed Down.

Arguments of Sides Completed By Attorneys Yesterday and Evidence all in.

MORGAN AND HILL ATTACKED

Statement Made By Plaintiffs That Holdings in Great Northern and Northern Pacific Increased Since Decision.

St Paul April 13.—The decision of the circuit court as to the right of E. H. Harriman and Winslow Pierce, as trustees for the Oregon Short Line, to file a petition in the case of the government against the Northern Securities Company and others, will be handed down tomorrow when the court meets. Arguments on the motion continued today. Judge Johnson addressed the court on behalf of the defendants, W. D. Guthrie closing for the petitioners.

Mr. Guthrie in closing furnished the sensation of the hearing by maintaining that the Northern Securities Company has since the decree of the United States circuit court declaring the securities company illegal, added materially to its holdings of the Northern Pacific and Great Northern stock, with the intention of retaining control of these roads. This statement Elihu M. Root took occasion to deny emphatically and specifically, saying that he was authorized to say that neither Hill nor Morgan have acquired one share in either company since the decree was handed down.

Synod in Session.

Elmira, N. Y., April 13.—The foreign mission board of the German Evangelical synod of North America, is in session in this city. The meetings will last three days.

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FISHING

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